

THE RAINBOW FISH



Jayashree Deshpande
Monappa

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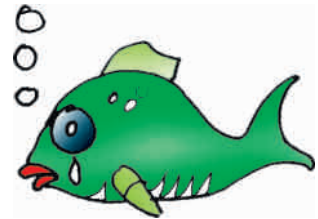
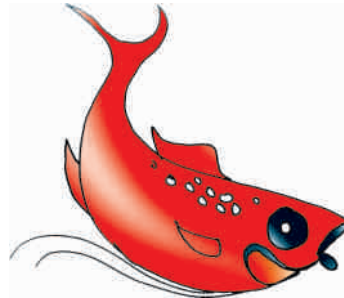
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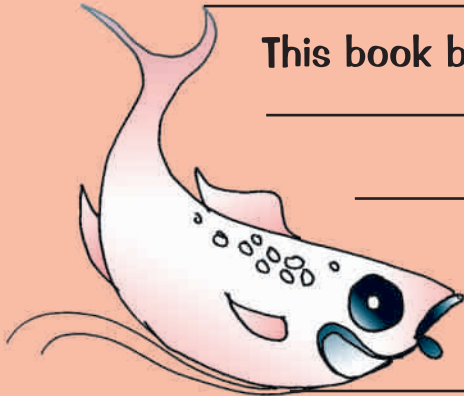
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THE RAINBOW FISH

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This book belongs to

Raju lived in the city. But every summer, when school was out, he headed straight for his Ajja's house in the village.

One summer, Raju decided it was time he learnt to swim.

"Ajja, I want to learn to swim," he said to his Ajja.

"Will you teach me?"

"That's wonderful!" said Ajja. "I shall take you down to the river tomorrow, and Mallanna Sir will teach you."

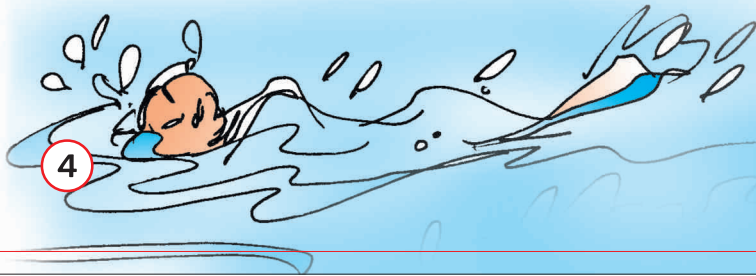
That night, Raju's dreams were full of happy thoughts about learning to swim.

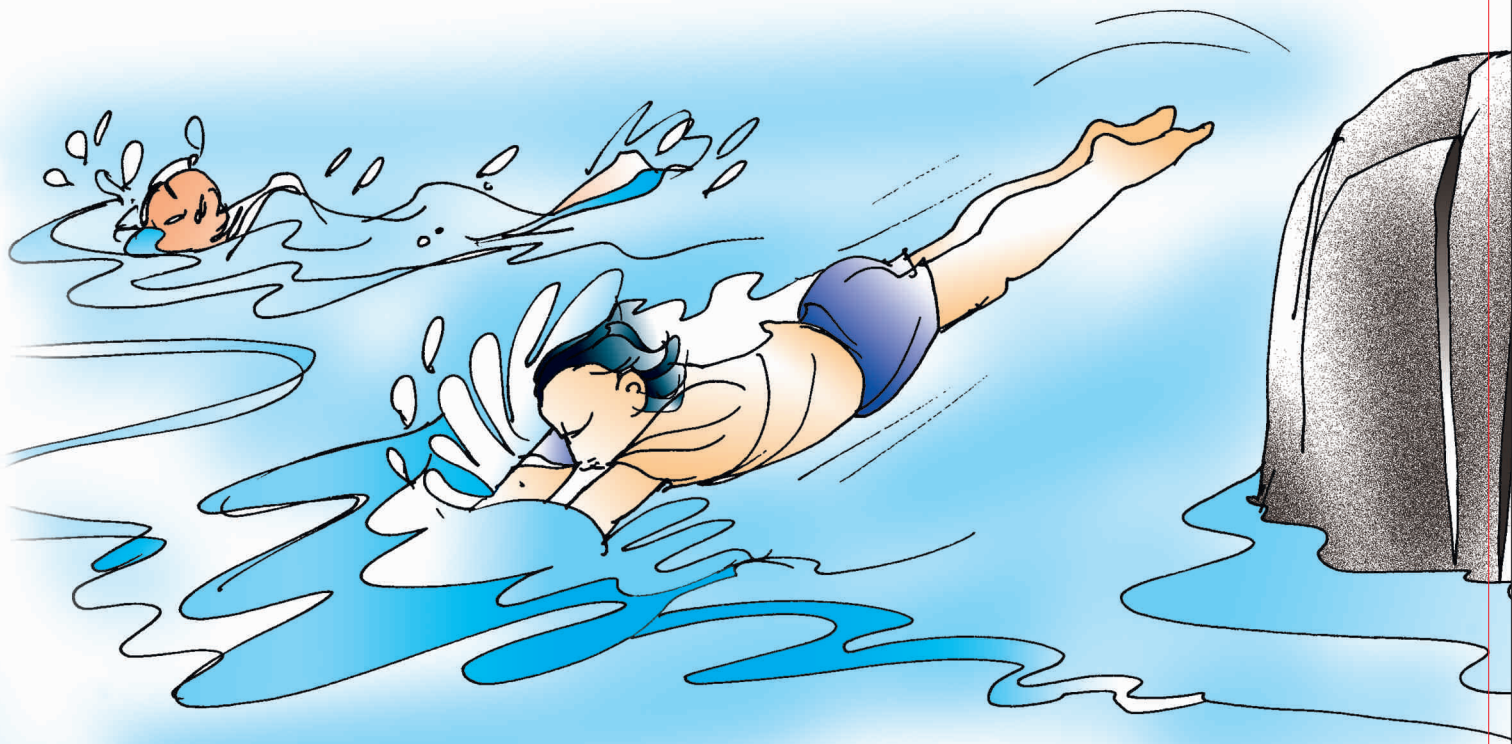




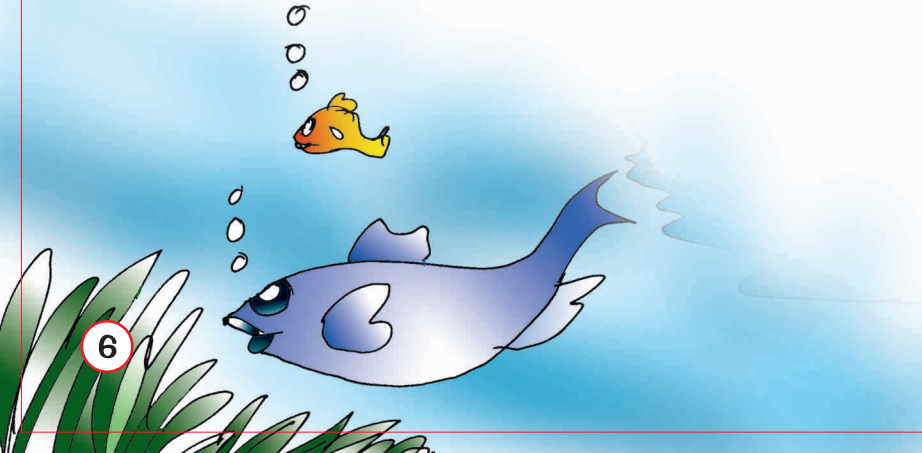
When Raju and Ajja went down to the river the next morning, they saw that the river was full of children learning to swim. "Have you come to join Mallanna Sir's classes?" one of them called out to him. "Yes," said Raju. "I want to learn to swim like you all. But I'm a little scared, sometimes..."

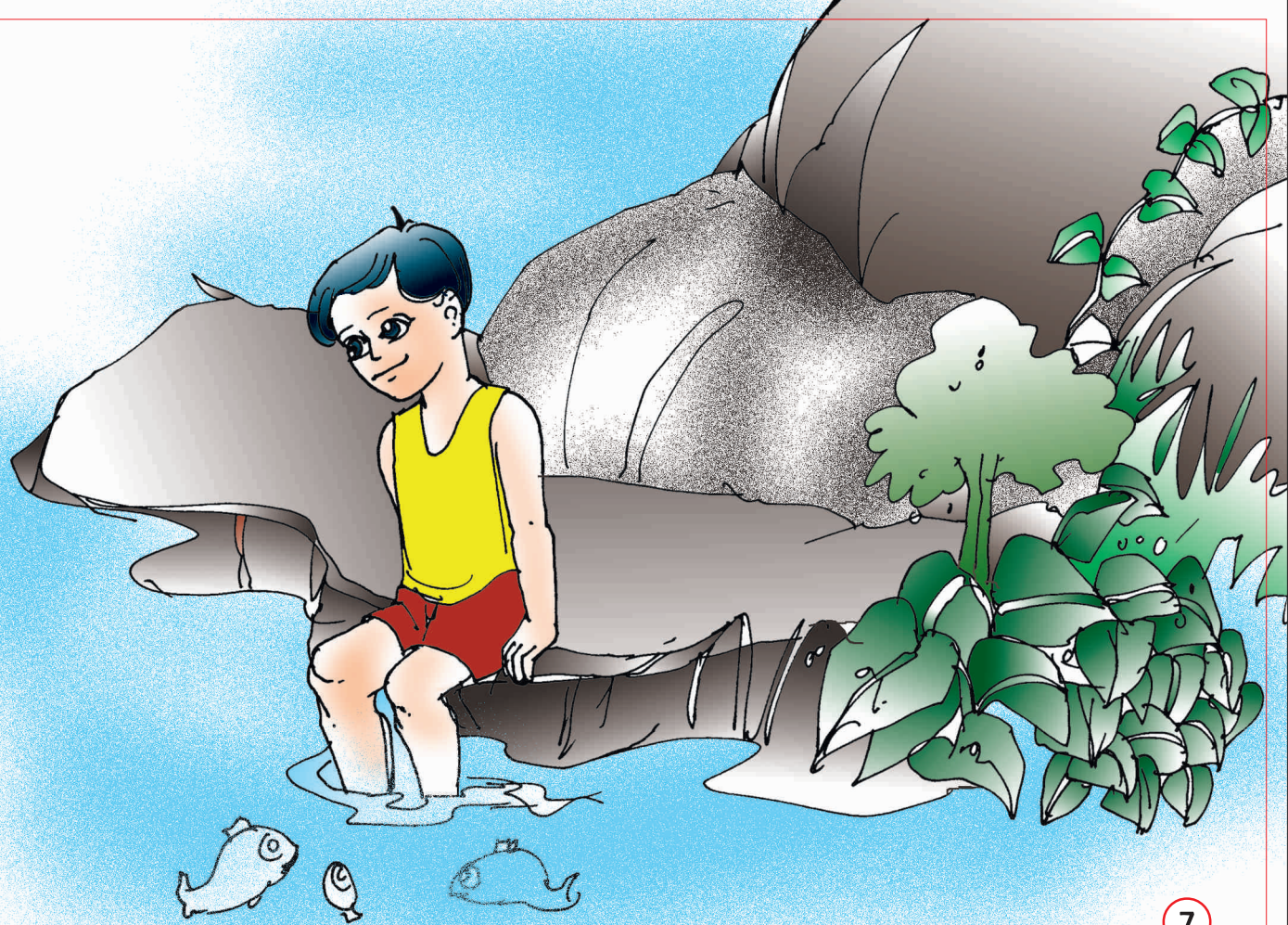
"Don't be," said the children. "Soon you will be swimming like a fish." So saying, the children climbed on to the top of a rock and began to leap into the water one after the other. No sooner had they landed than they began swimming strongly.





Raju wasn't ready to jump in yet. He sat on the rock,
dangling his feet in the cool water. Then he gave a
sudden start: something was tickling his feet!
Looking down into the water, he saw that it was full of
little fish: green ones, yellow ones, and brown ones.
They all had long thin tails.





As he watched, Raju saw a large rainbow coloured fish swimming quickly up to him. "What are you doing here, Raju?" asked the fish.

"I want to learn to swim like you," answered Raju.

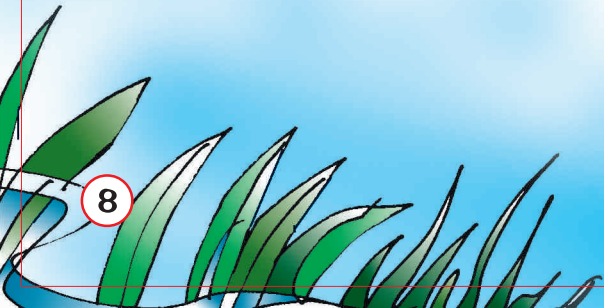
"You are all such fabulous swimmers!"

The fish laughed. "We'd better be!" said the rainbow fish.

"The water is our natural environment. We are very happy here.

But you humans spoil everything by trapping us in your nets."

"You're right," said Raju. "I have read that fishermen catch fish like you and sell them in the market."





"What else have you read?" asked the rainbow fish.

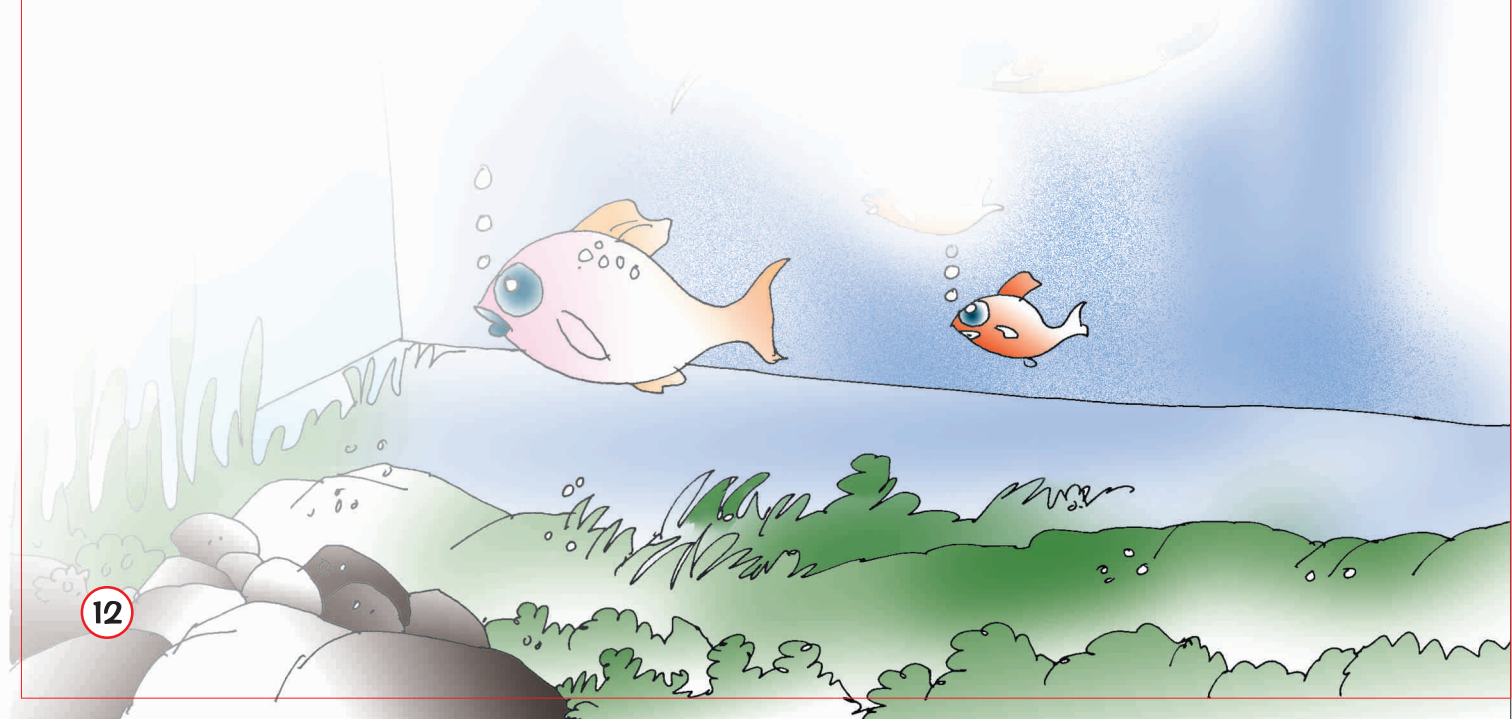
**"Do you have any idea how many kinds of fish
there are in the world?"**

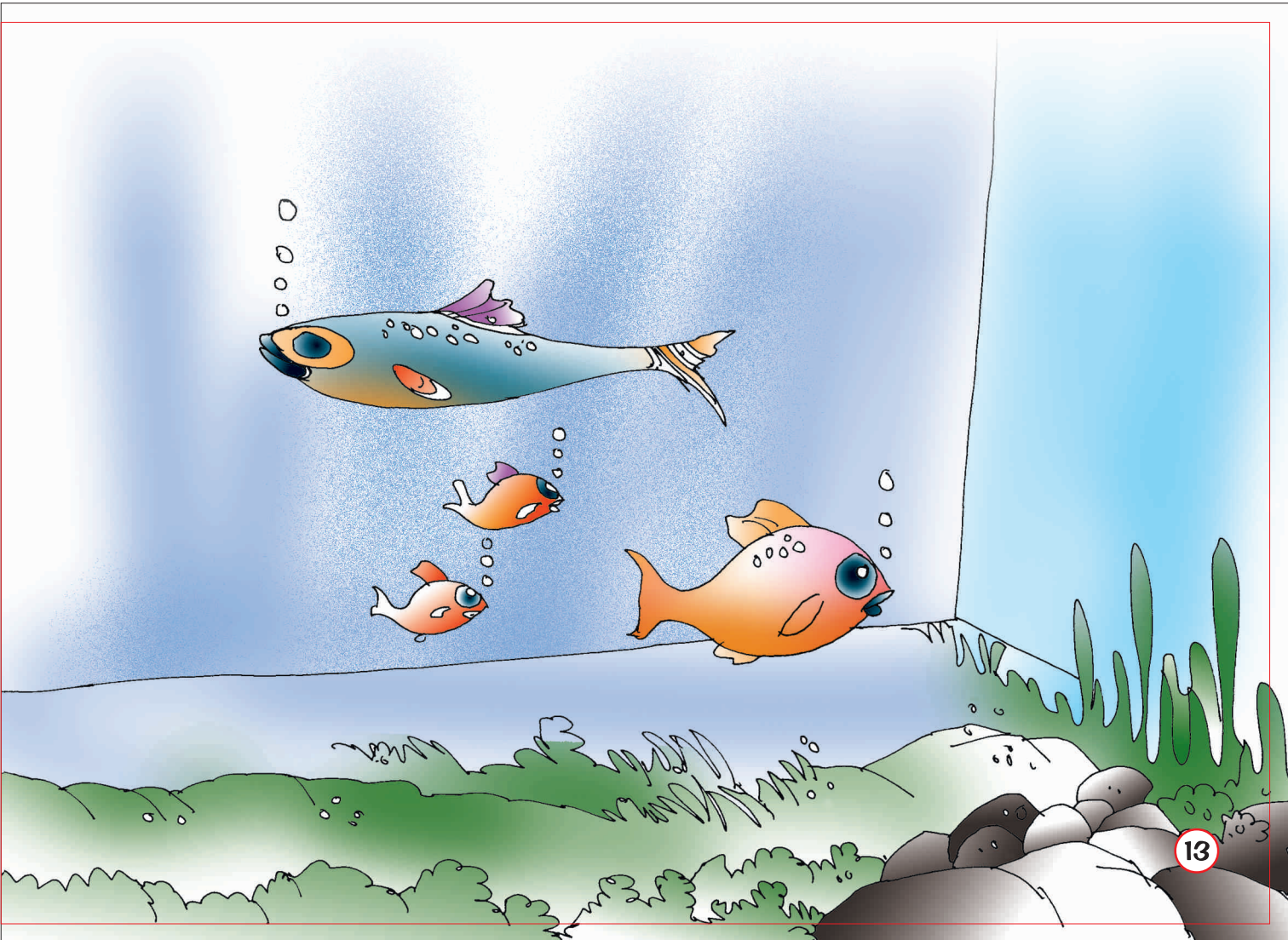
**"Sort of," replied Raju. "We have a fat book at
school with pictures of hundreds of kinds of fish."**

**"Then you probably also know of the glass boxes
that people imprison us in," said the rainbow fish.**



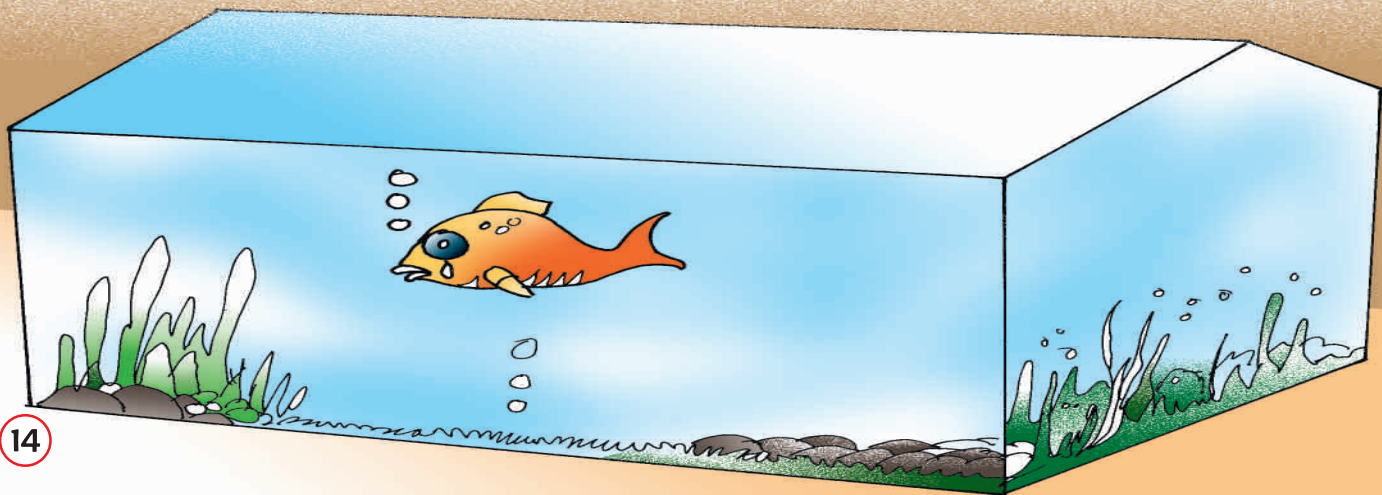
"Do you mean fish tanks?" asked Raju. "Of course I know about them. There is a building called an aquarium in our city that is full of glass boxes with different kinds of colourful fish. Why, I have a little fish tank in my own house full of the prettiest little fish!"

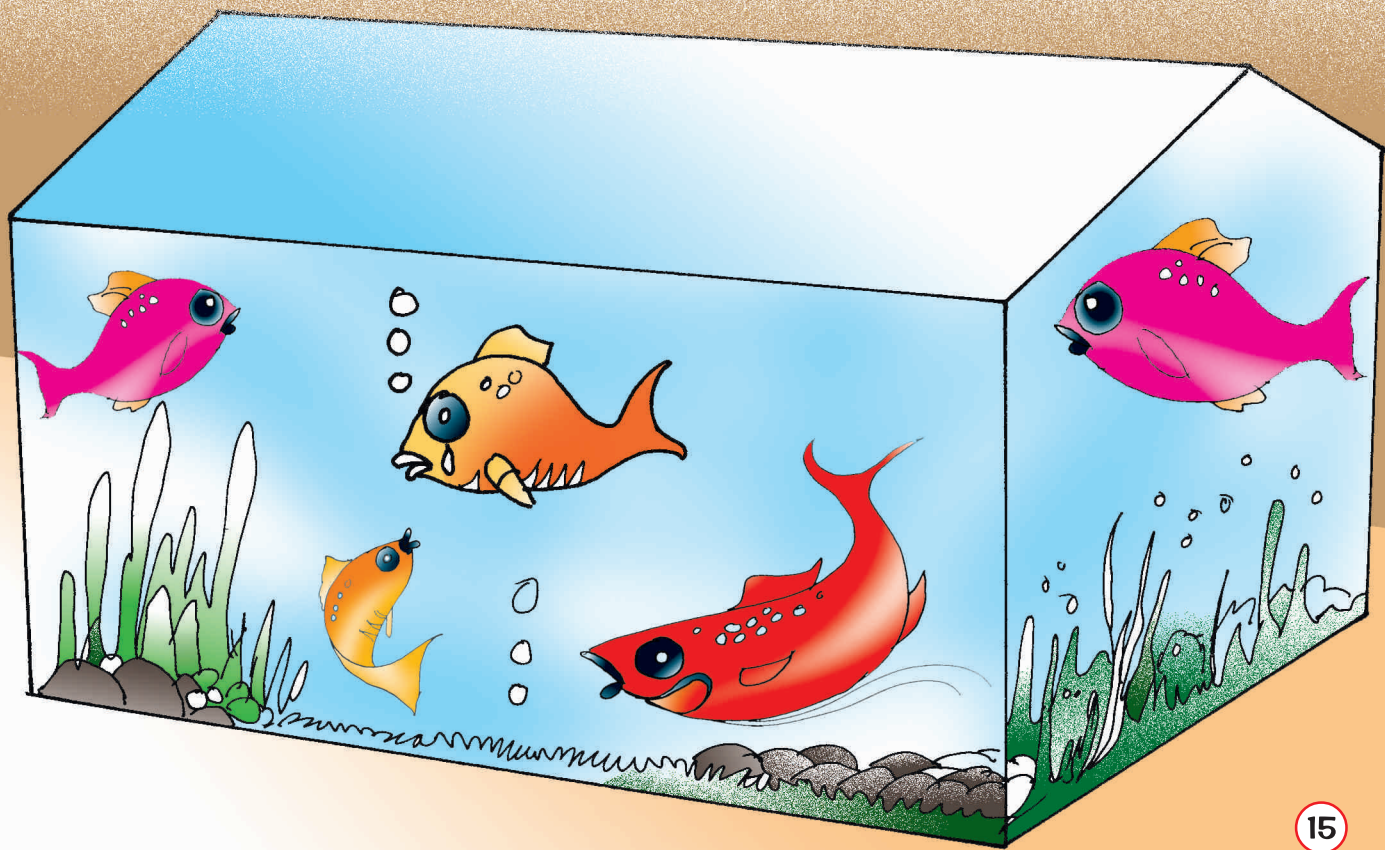


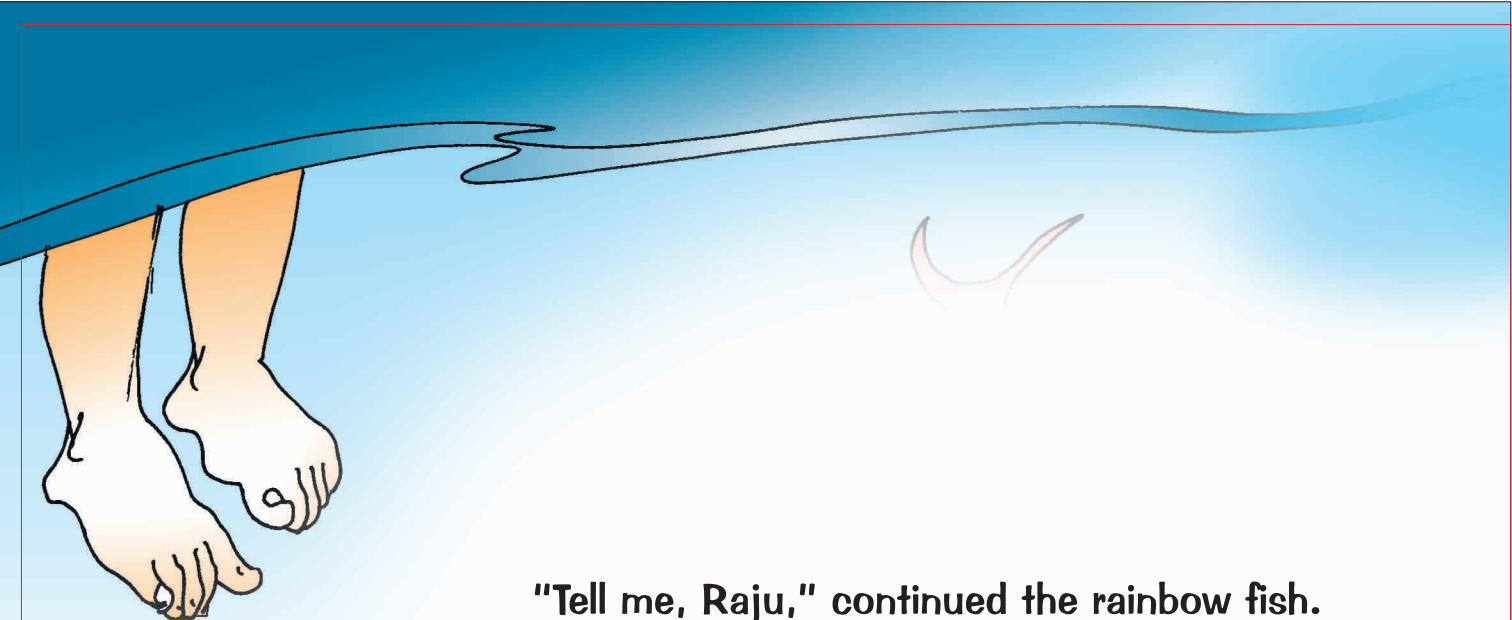


The rainbow fish sighed. "Yes, Raju," he said. "Mother Nature blessed us with bright colours and beautiful shapes. We wish no one any harm. All we want is to be left alone, to enjoy our rivers and lakes and our oceans and seas, but you humans simply do not let us live freely and fearlessly."

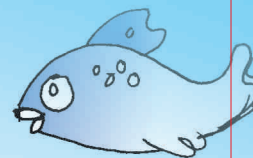
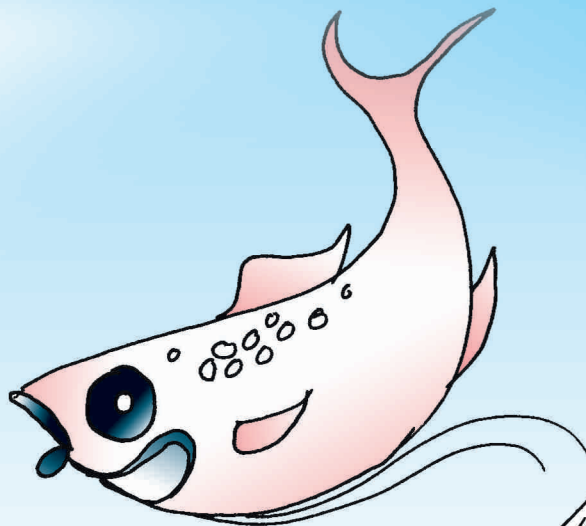
"You're right, rainbow fish," agreed Raju.



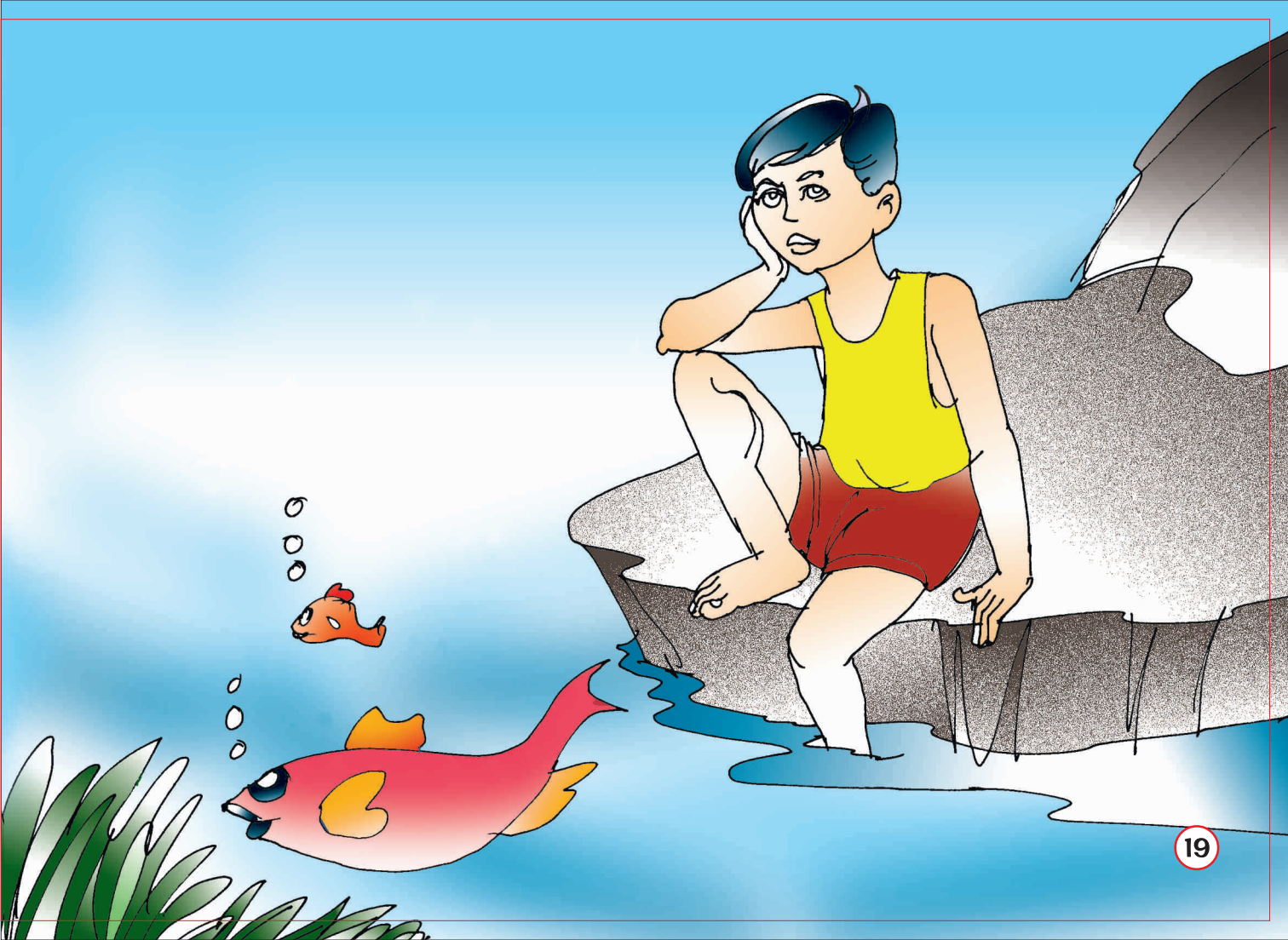




**"Tell me, Raju," continued the rainbow fish.
"Would you like to live in a little glass box
where there isn't enough room to move about,
not enough natural food, and no friends or
relatives anywhere in sight? We don't.
We hate it. But you humans simply do not
understand!"**

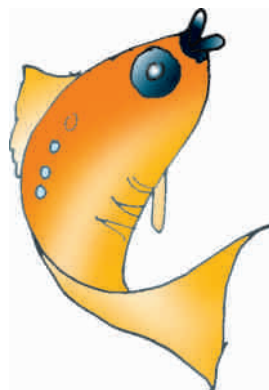
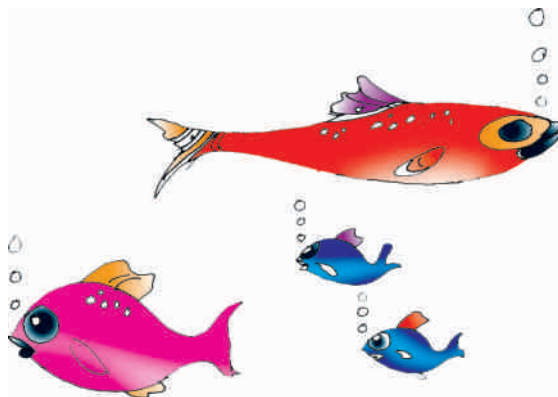
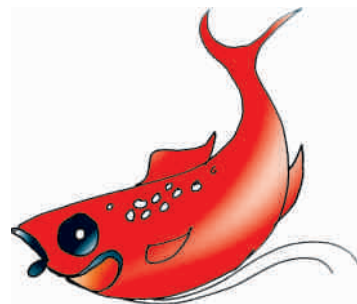
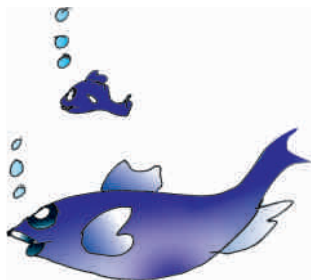
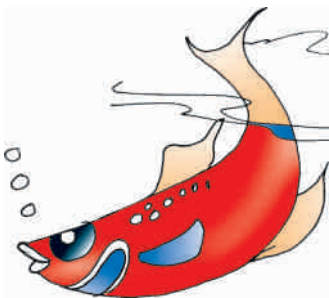


Raju thought about it. He didn't think he would enjoy being trapped in a glass box at all. It was a terrible thing to imprison any living creature, thought Raju. He felt very sorry for the rainbow fish and his kin.

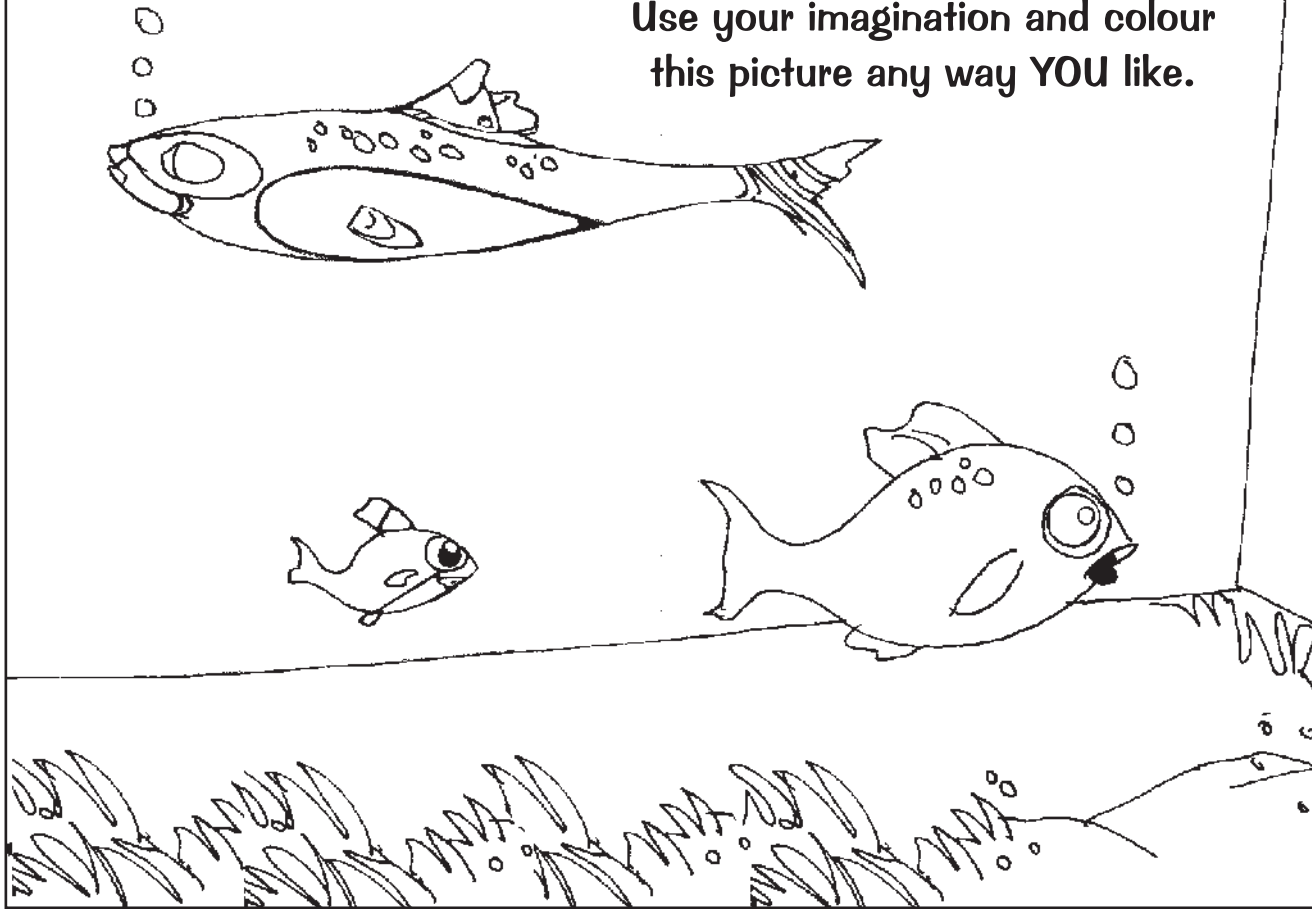


Raju turned to the rainbow fish. "When I go back to the city, I shall let all the fish in my tank go," he promised. "And I will tell all my friends to do the same. Are you happy now, Rainbow Fish?" "Yes, Raju," smiled the fish. "You are an understanding child, and you have a kind heart. Thank you." All the fish swam past Raju's feet, tickling them again in a final goodbye, before they plunged once more into the depths of the river.

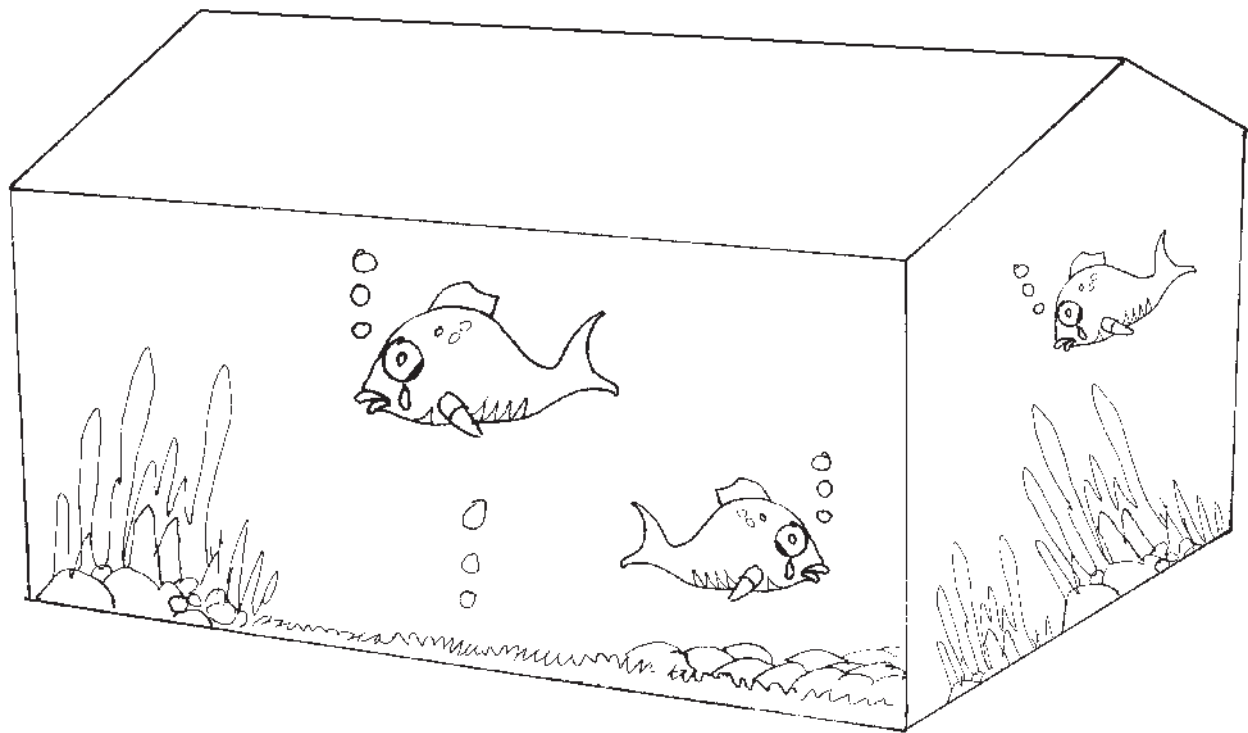




Use your imagination and colour
this picture any way YOU like.



Use your imagination and colour this picture any way YOU like.





My name is Alfiya and I study in class. I want to become an engineer like my grandfather. I like Kareena and Shahid Kapoor and never miss their films.

Thank you for buying this book. My friends and I will get to read many more books in our library because you bought this book.



Jayashree Deshpande is a prolific author of short stories, essays, humour and novels in Kannada. She has been writing for nearly fifteen years. Her stories have been published in all leading magazines and publications in Kannada. Jayashree has travelled widely across USA and Europe and loves writing travelogues. Her hobbies include travel, photography and reading literature.



Monappa was a painter and later took fancy to graphic art. He has worked with leading Kannada publications including Manipal Publications and Printers India. After almost two decades of full time work as a staff artist he took voluntary retirement to start his own art studio in the outskirts of Bangalore. He is presently doing commercial work for media institutions and book publishing industry.

All of us enjoy watching fish, especially bright and colourful ones, swimming around in tanks that we keep in our homes. But do the fish enjoy it as much?

Let's listen in on the conversation Raju and the rainbow fish have in this book, and find out.

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